

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A method and apparatus is provided to allow telephony or other types of media communications and services to be provided for a device having a private network address that resides behind a firewall and network address and port translation (NAPT) module (which is not aware of the underlying protocol for the communications and services). Examples of the underlying protocol includes the Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) and Real-Time Protocol (RTP). A path through the firewall and NAPT module is defined by use of keep-alive messages communicated through the firewall and network address translator. Addresses that are allocated by the firewall and NATP module are associated with the device for both signaling and media communications. A feature of the firewall that enables the provision of telephony and media communications through the firewall that is protocol-unaware is that the firewall allows responses to messages initiated by the device back through the firewall.